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Federal and State Programs for the Aging

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Illinois Department on Aging

421 East Capitol Avenue
Springfield, Illinois 62706
217/785-3356

Room 731 - Monadnock Building
53 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604
312/793-2914

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Federal and State Programs for the Aging

● Social Services

The Illinois Department on Aging provides federal and state funds to operate more than 300 social service projects. Of these, 13 are Area Agencies on Aging, which re-allocate funds to develop, stimulate and operate a wide range of services. Included are multi-purpose senior centers, information and referral, transportation and escort, home/health aides, telephone reassurance, training for employment, employment activities, lip reading, hearing tests, cooperation on the Senior Driver Program, education and many others. To participate in these programs, check with the nearest Area Agency on Aging, or write **Aging, 421 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62706.**

● Community Care

Due to physical and/or mental conditions, some elderly persons can't cope with the tasks of daily living without assistance for extended periods of time. In many instances, institutional care is felt to be inappropriate or undesirable in this situation. In response, a community-based program has been developed as an alternative choice. Known as the **Community Care Program,** it consists of several essential services which permit the elderly person to remain in his/her own home. The basic services provided are chore/housekeeping, day care for adults, homemaker, and information and referral.

An individual must be 60 years of age or older to be considered eligible and must be in physical and financial need of service. For more information, contact your nearest Area Agency on Aging, or write **Aging, 421 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62706,** phone toll-free **800/252-8966.**

● Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Under federal regulation the Department on Aging is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints made by and for persons in long-term care facilities and developing local Volunteer Nursing Home Visitor Programs. For further information, call toll-free **800/252-8966** or write: **State Ombuds-**

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man, Department on Aging, 421 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62706.

- **Protection from Elderly Abuse**

To counter all forms of family violence, including elderly abuse, the 82nd General Assembly passed, and the Governor approved, the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. The act clearly recognizes that beating another family member is a crime which will no longer be tolerated and ignored; offers protection to families from further abuse; assists the victim; and, provides treatment for abusers. For more information, write or call the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 931 South Fourth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62703, phone 217/789-2830, or contact your Area Agency on Aging.

- **Nutrition**

A nutrition and nutrition education program with outreach services is federally funded, and those funds are administered by the **Department on Aging** through the Area Agencies on Aging. Currently more than 22,000 meals are served daily, five days a week, at more than 500 individual sites. Additionally, nearly 8,000 home-delivered meals are served to the home-bound elderly. Nutrition sites are located in each of Illinois' 102 counties. For meal sites in your area, call your nearest Area Agency on Aging.

- **Social Security**

To assure a continuing income, monthly payments are made to eligible retired and disabled workers and their dependents and to survivors of deceased workers. For additional information, contact your local Social Security district office.

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

Supplemental Security Income is an income maintenance program which provides a nationally uniform income floor for those persons age 65 and older, or who are blind or disabled and have limited incomes. Effective January 1, 1984, an eligible single person may receive up to $314 monthly, and an eligible couple $472. These rates may be subject to annual cost of living increases. For more information, contact your local Social Security district office.

- **Medicare**

This medical program is administered by the Social Security Administration. Seniors, Age 65 and over, and certain others, may receive Medicare benefits of two types — A and B. Part A covers hospitaliza-

tion, stays in extended care facilities, and some home health services. It is free to persons covered by Social Security and is available for $155 a month, effective January, 1984, to other qualified persons not covered by Social Security. Part B Medicare is called SMIB (Supplemental Medical Insurance Benefits) and is available at $14.60 monthly, effective January, 1984. Coverage includes physicians' services, out-patient services, and certain home health services. Home health care services are also available under Medicare.

- **Medicaid**

Medicaid is a medical program administered by the Illinois Department of Public Aid. Medicaid also covers some medical charges not covered by the federal Medicare program. Check eligibility with an office of the County Department of Public Aid in the county of the applicant's residence.

- **Food Stamps**

This program enables the elderly, as well as other age groups, to increase their food purchase dollars by issuing food stamps to supplement or offset cash requirements for groceries. The dollar value of food stamps issued is contingent upon income and other eligibility criteria as established by law. For more information, contact your county Public Aid office.

- **State Supplemental Payments (SSP)**

State Supplemental Payments provide additional forms of assistance to the aged, blind and disabled, including (1) SSI recipients, (2) SSI pending applicants, and (3) those with incomes over SSI standards. For detailed information, contact your county Public Aid office.

- **Circuit Breaker**

Circuit Breaker is a Department of Revenue program for Illinois residents who are 65 or older or disabled and who have incomes of less than $12,000 per year. Two types of relief are available through this program:

1. **Property Tax Relief** — This program provides grants up to $700 to eligible persons paying rent or property taxes.

   Elderly persons living in an Illinois residence (home, apartment, nursing or sheltered care home, etc.) that was subject to the property tax for the year in which benefits are being applied for are eligible. Mobile home owners are also entitled to property tax relief if they

paid privilege taxes on the mobile home used as their principal residence.

Anyone entitled to a property tax relief grant is automatically entitled to an additional tax relief grant.

2. **Additional Tax Relief** — This program provides a flat grant of $80 to persons 65 years of age and older or disabled who have an annual household income of less than $12,000.

   Applicants may receive help from any Department of Revenue office or their Area Agency on Aging.

- **Additional State Income Tax Exemption**

The Illinois Department of Revenue administers this program.

Citizens 65 years of age and over who are required to file state income tax returns receive an extra $1,000 exemption since they are entitled to the same exemptions as those they take on their federal income tax returns.

- **Illinois Inheritance Tax**

Illinois inheritance tax was eliminated as of January 1, 1983. The assets of the deceased are no longer frozen, and it is not necessary to arrange for the opening of the safe deposit box.

- **Pension Exemptions**

Recognized retirement pensions are exempt from state income tax. Check with the Illinois Department of Revenue for more information.

- **Deferral of Property Taxes**

Under a state law passed in 1983, persons 65 and over may elect to defer payment of their property taxes until death, if their annual income is less than $10,000. Tax would be paid once the home is sold or when the taxpayer dies.

- **Homestead Exemption**

Homestead Exemption is a program administered through each county tax assessor's office or county Supervisor of Assessment in Illinois.

Senior homeowners have their real estate taxes reduced regardless of their income or the original amount of real estate taxes. A person may apply for

Homestead Exemption during the year of his/her 65th birthday. A $2,000 exemption is applied to the equalized value of the elderly person's home, and to be eligible an elderly person must own and reside in the home. Proof of age and home ownership are required.

This program does not apply to ordinary renters who are provided aid through the Circuit Breaker Act. Application should be made to the county or township assessor's office in the county of residence.

General Homestead Exemption exempts the first $3,500 of any increase over the 1977 equalized assessed valuation of residential homes. Persons who own, occupy and pay real estate taxes on a single family residence or leased property will be eligible.

- **Tax Credit for Adult Day Care**

The Economic Recovery Tax Act which went into effect in 1982 permits a federal tax credit to families with elderly dependents who participate in adult day care centers. To qualify for tax credit, the adult day care centers must receive payments for providing care and must serve more than six individuals. For more information, contact the Internal Revenue Service office.

- **Reduced Rate Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

All seniors 65 and over do not need to purchase a hunting or fishing license in the state of Illinois. However, individuals need to carry proof of age. A "Golden Years Hunting and Fishing License" is available from the Department of Conservation. It serves as identification for seniors who may not have a driver's license or other identification.

Blind and disabled persons of any age do not need to purchase a hunting or fishing license in Illinois.

- **Camping**

Seniors age 62 to 64 can camp at state-managed campgrounds at half rate. Individuals 65 or older can camp without charge. Days for senior citizen camping at these reduced rates are limited to Mondays through Thursdays. Full rates are charged on other days.

- **National Park Visitations**

A Golden Age Passport is available free for a lifetime to persons age 60 and older, upon entry to any national park. The pass admits holder and others accompanying him or her in a single, private, noncommercial vehicle. For additional information, check with officials at your nearest national park.

- **Retired Senior Volunteer Program**

These programs provide a wide variety of volunteer service opportunities for senior citizens throughout Illinois. Telephone the RSVP office nearest you for information.

- **Foster Grandparent Program**

This program is operated through nine local agencies in Illinois and provides volunteer opportunities (stipend provided) for those over 60 years of age with limited incomes. Foster grandparents provide a one-to-one service to children with special problems. For further information, contact: State Director ACTION Program, Region V Office, 1 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, telephone 312/353-3622.

- **Photo Identification Cards**

If you are a non-driver, you may apply for an Illinois photo identification card at any driver-service facility. You need to show at least three forms of identification, including one that contains your date of birth and one with your signature, to compare with the signature on the application. There is no charge for persons 65 years of age or older.

- **Employment**

For information regarding employment, contact the Area Agency on Aging in your region or write **Aging, 421 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62706.**

- **Reduced Fares for Public Transportation**

The Illinois Department of Transportation administers this program through local and regional transportation authorities.

The program provides for reduced fares for persons 65 years of age or older and handicapped persons on public transportation. Persons should contact the transportation authority in their area or the Area Agency on Aging for information.

- **Other Travel Discounts**

Amtrak offers a 25 percent rail passenger discount for persons 65 and older. The discount applies to any trip except holiday time on any AMTRAK train when the regular one-way coach fare is $40 or more. Greyhound Bus and Trailways Bus and others offer a ten percent discount on regular fares with no restrictions unless a "special" would be less. Many airlines also offer special discounts to seniors.

● Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

This program provides talking books, books in Braille and talking book machines for the blind. Check with your local library system or write the Division of the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, 1291 Taylor Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20542. Telephone 202/882-5500.

Reader's Digest offers reading service to older Americans with visual problems by publishing its **Large-Type Editions** and a **Large-Type Reader.** Information can be obtained by writing to: Reader's Digest Large Print Publications, P.O. Box 241, Mount Morris, Illinois 61054.

The Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the U.S. Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and the U.S. Constitution.

HROUGH TOLL-FREE NUMBERS:

Illinois Home Energy Assistance Program and Home Weatherization Program: 1-800-252-8643

Sponsored by the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, these programs offer assistance to low income individuals who need help paying heating bills or who have home weatherization needs.

Federal Crime Insurance: 1-800-638-8780

Will insure homes up to $10,000 against crime.

National Conservation and Renewable Energy Inquiry and Referral Service: 1-800-523-2929

Will provide fact sheets on solar heating, insulating your home, and other information regarding energy conservation.

Cancer Information Service: 1-800-422-6237

Heart Disease: 1-800-241-6993

Illinois State Dental society: 1-800-252-2930

Provides information about a program that enables low-income citizens to receive dental care at a reduced fee; also provides information on the portable dental equipment program which is available for the homebound, elderly and handicapped.

Medicare/Medicaid Complaint Line: 1-800-368-5779

Alzheimer's Disease: 1-800-572-6037

Hill-Burton Hospital Free Care Program: 1-800-638-0742

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-423-8000

Answers consumers' questions about private life and health insurance products, services, companies.

- **New Illinois Commerce Commission Policy Regarding Utilities Cut-offs**

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) has adopted new rules governing the shut-off of gas and/or electric service to residential customers during the winter months. Under the new rules, no shut-offs can occur between December 1 and March 31 unless the utility adheres to a rigorous series of guidelines. The utility must also provide a list of agencies which provide financial assistance to customers, and arrange a deferred payment plan.

During the rest of the year (April 1 through November 30), there are similar but different rules governing shut-offs; however, service cannot be discontinued on any day where the following day (or weekend) is predicted to be 32 degrees or below in temperature.

- **Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped**

This program provides talking books, books in Braille and talking book machines for the blind. Check with your local library system or write the Division of the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, 1291 Taylor Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20542. Telephone 202/882-5500.

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INFORMATION PROVIDED THROUGH TOLL-FREE NUMBERS:

Illinois Department on Aging: 1-800-252-8966
Provides information regarding the Community Care Program and will assist you in reaching local agencies that offer other services for seniors.

Attorney General's Office: 1-800-243-5377, Chicago
1-800-252-2518, Springfield
This program works statewide to combat consumer fraud and crime against the elderly.

Lieutenant Governor's Senior Action Office: 1-800-252-6565
Will inform seniors where to find help with matters involving housing, Medicaid, Medicare, nutrition, transportation, and other programs available for the elderly.

Secretary of State's Office: 1-800-252-8980
Assists seniors who need information regarding driver's licenses, license plates, titles, state photo I.D. cards, state libraries and defensive driving insurance discounts.

Illinois Department of Revenue: 217-782-5864
Provides information regarding Circuit Breaker.

United Internal Revenue Problems Resolution Office: 312-886-4309; 1-800-435-1040, city of Chicago; 1-800-424-1040, elsewhere in state
Taxpayers may call this number for assistance in preparing returns, for account information regarding bills and other IRS correspondence, to inquire about refunds (after ten weeks only), and to order tax forms.

Illinois Legislative Information Hotline (during regular sessions or veto sessions): 1-800-252-8652
Provides information on state legislation.

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Hill-Burton Hospital Free Care Program: 1-800-638-0742

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-423-8000
Answers consumers' questions about private life and health insurance products, services, companies.

Area Agencies on Aging in Illinois

Area 1 **Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging**
4223 East State Street, Eastmoor Building
Rockford, Illinois 61108 815/226-4901

Area 2 **Region Two Area Agency on Aging**
P.O. Box 809
Kankakee, Illinois 60901 815/939-0727

Area 3 **Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
4016 Ninth Street
Rock Island, Illinois 61201 309/793-6800

Area 4 **Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
3829 North Sheridan Road
Peoria, Illinois 61614 309/686-9390

Area 5 **East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
2714 McGraw Drive
Bloomington, Illinois 61701 309/662-9393
Information & Referral No.: 800/322-0484

Area 6 **West Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging**
1125 Hampshire Street; P.O. Box 428
Quincy, Illinois 62306 217/223-7904
Information & Referral No.: 217/224-3535

Area 7 **Project LIFE Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
2815 West Washington, Suite 310
Springfield, Illinois 62702 217/787-9234
Information & Referral No.: 800/252-2918

Area 8 **Southwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging**
Edgemont Building, Room 107
8787 State Street
East St. Louis, Illinois 62203 618/397-4118
Information & Referral No.: 800/642-3859

Area 9 **Midland Area Agency on Aging**
140 S. Locust St., Room 413; P.O. Box 1420
Centralia, Illinois 62801 618/532-1853
Info. & Referral No.: 618/532-1853, Ext. 04

Area 10 **Southeastern Ill. Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
319-A Market Street
Mt. Carmel, Illinois 62863 618/262-8001
Information & Referral No.: 800/642-8621

Area 11 **Egyptian Area Agency on Aging, Inc.**
108 South Division Street
Carterville, Illinois 62918 618/985-4011
Information & Referral No.: 800/642-3781

Area 12 **Office for Senior Citizens and Handicapped**
530 N. Peshtigo Court
Chicago, Illinois 60601 312/744-4016 (Voice)
312/744-6777 (TDD)

Area 13 **Suburban Cook County Area Agency on Aging**
400 West Madison, Room 200
Chicago, Illinois 60606 312/559-0616

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